



## Iowa Smart Planning Draft Recommendations Comments Received Via Email

October 13, 2010

The following comments were received via email to the Rebuild Iowa Office regarding the draft recommendations approved by the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force on September 15, 2010. Responses were requested by October 10, 2010.

### **E-mail #1:**

3.2.3 Increase in the number of trail, pedestrian or bike plans and paths built.

I would prefer to delete "and paths built." Then, add a new goal:

"3.2.4 Increase the number of bikeways, bicycle facilities, walkways, and paths built." The current goal locks Iowa into a path is the only bikeway or walkway mindset. The suggested language opens the door to bikelanes, sharrows, and more. Bicycle facilities could address bike racks on buses, bike parking, or similar infrastructure. A good plan should allow for innovation.

**E-mail #2:** I appreciate the incorporation of bicycles and alternative transportation as a focal point of the livable communities' goal. However, I would like to point out the benefit of a bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure rather than solely "bike paths."

Changing the language of goal 3.2.3 by deleting "and paths built," and adding a goal, "3.2.4 Increase in the number of bikeways, bicycle facilities, walkways, and paths built," will service a much larger commuting and recreation population. Not all population centers and amenities can be adequately serviced by paths. Creating a larger network of the facilities previously mentioned will truly provide a all encompassing alternative transportation opportunity for livable communities.

**E-mail #3:** I would like to see a change in the phrasing of the goal. The current goal is: "3.2.3 Increase in the number of trail, pedestrian or bike plans and paths built."

I would like to vote for the following changes--

- Delete "and paths built" from Goal 3.2.3 The current goal locks Iowa into a path is the only bikeway or walkway mindset.
- Add a new goal: "3.2.4 Increase the number of bikeways, bicycle facilities, walkways, and paths built." This language opens the door to bikelanes, sharrows, and more. Bicycle facilities could address bike racks on buses, bike parking, or similar infrastructure. A good plan should allow for innovation.

I appreciate your attention and work on developing Iowa's infrastructure.

**E-mail #4:** I read recently that The Iowa Smart Planning Task Force has released their draft plan. I've been advised that the plan attempts to organize Iowa's strategic planning process. Since I commute to work on a bicycle regularly and I use my bike as a primary means of transportation, I was pleased to learn that bicycles and alternative transportation are a focal point of the livable communities goal.

I am writing regarding a few concerns that I have about the Plan.

Section 3.2.3 currently reads, "Increase in the number of trail, pedestrian or bike plans and paths built." I would ask that "and paths built." be deleted, and a new goal be added as Section 3.2.4: "Increase the number of bikeways, bicycle facilities, walkways, and paths built." The current goal locks Iowa into a mindset that says, "'path' is the only bikeway or walkway." My suggested language allows for bike lanes, sharrows, and more. Bicycle facilities could address bike racks on buses, bike parking, or similar infrastructure.

A good plan should allow for innovation. Please do all you can to have the above-mentioned changes made to the Plan, and ensure that the Plan will provide ample room for innovation.

**E-mail #5:** A resource that you may wish to utilize for improving resiliency to natural and/or man made disasters is the Iowa Disaster Human Resource Council, ([www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/ProgramsIDHRC.html](http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/ProgramsIDHRC.html).) This Council is composed of many faith based disaster response agencies/organizations as well as governmental and business partners.

I have been a part of this Council since 2007, as a representative of Adventist Community Services Disaster Response. I am also Coordinator for Mid-America Adventist Community Services Disaster Response covering nine states.

**E-mail #6:** As a smart plan is developed for the State I believe the following things need to be considered.

Coordination of local, regional and state planning for transportation, flood impact reduction and watershed needs can help reduce government duplication and costs. It is important for agencies and local governments to find ways to better coordinate their efforts and increase efficiencies to balance the budget.

Coordination and planning for these purposes is the responsibility of all levels of government. The costs associated with this planning and coordination need to be prioritized by the various state agencies and local governments and paid for with current resources.

The legislature should not be giving new authority for state or local governments to levy new property taxes, franchise fees or energy taxes to raise funds for smart planning and coordination. In an effort to be fiscally responsible, the state legislature should be reducing state expenditures and financial impacts on local governments.

New state agencies or offices do not need to be created for these purposes, especially in poor economic times.

Any local, regional or state plans that force costly state or local regulations on private property owners, or that infringe upon property rights, must be avoided.

Local watershed planning should include a coalition of agricultural, conservation and public interests.

**E-mail #7:** As lifelong Iowans my wife and I offer the following as a suggestion for Smart Planning for Iowa:

My wife and I often make auto trips out West. We particularly travel throughout Iowa, Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin. Iowa's highways are TERRIBLE in comparison with those states. Iowa's highway infrastructure is embarrassing and in some cases

actually dangerous. What has happened in the past 20 years? We've moved from fairly good highways to the armpit of the Midwest (Okay, Illinois, with all its waste and fraud, is probably worse.

Other Iowans we talk to feel the same way. We'd say: FIX IOWA'S HIGHWAY SYSTEM!

**E-mail #8:** I attended the presentation of the draft recommendations in Red Oak on Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>. I did not complete the survey at the meeting because I felt I needed to think through some of the things before completing it. I will be putting the survey in the mail today or tomorrow.

I have studied the Recommendations distributed at the meeting and do have some comments on them, which I detail below. These are my opinions and reflections and should not be construed to reflect those of our city government or of those employed at City Hall.

I attended the Webinar presented July 7. I was already, as a consultant on economic development, recommending that the residents of Villisca work together to develop a strategic plan with the City of Villisca City Council taking the lead in setting out the process. Once I learned about the Smart Planning process, I added the principles, etc. to my recommendation. To date they have not acted on the recommendation because of other priorities. Hopefully, with this task in front of them, they will act sooner rather than later. The exception could be if they saw that it is something that would be produced by SWIPCO. As I read the recommendations and as you responded to my questions at the Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> meeting, it seems that you are expecting the documents to be created locally.

**Re: Recommendation 3.3:** In the Draft Recommendations you discuss providing funding for the COGs. When it comes to the local governments, many of the suggestions for funding comes from an additional tax burden on the local tax payers. This sounds well and good but, I believe our local council members will turn to the COG to write the plan rather than finding the financing for it locally. It would be difficult in these economically tight times to make the case for paying for it with local taxes when it could come at no expense from SWIPCO. It is my belief, and only mine, that that would work against what the Smart Planning is attempting to accomplish.

Since local planning in even the smallest of communities benefits the entire state of Iowa, I believe the costs should be shared not only with the COGS but down to the local level. In reality, it is the smaller communities that probably need a greater amount of funding because they do not have staff in place with the professional experience to write the plan. Part of that can be accomplished by asking the Iowa communities of all sizes to accomplish some of the planning process through the use of volunteers to reduce the costs for all communities.

My recommendation to the City of Villisca is to start with a Study Group process. This is a process that is used in the Horizons program of the Northwest Area Foundation which was facilitated in Iowa through ISU Extension. Villisca was a Horizons community and these study groups were some of the most productive part of the program. If Villisca used this process, they would need to find some source of funds for materials, refreshments, and location for the groups to meet.

**Recommendation 3.2:** I do like the action step of redirecting current appropriations

**Recommendation 3.1; Proposal:** \* Establish a new funding source. \* Allowing COGs levy authority to conduct regional planning.

Granted, there needs to be funding for what will be required of the COGs to review local plans. The COGs or some entity will need to also provide coordination of such things as watershed studies or transportation diversity between community plans. I do feel that as the current recommendation reads, it does not clearly differentiate what the COGs should be paid for.

**Recommendation 3.7:** This can be a great resource. It needs to assure that it does not have top-down dictates.

**Recommendation 3.8:** Is this a duplication of the ISU data bases?

**Recommendation 1.1:** I would suggest that the number of those appointed by the governor be raised and that there be a requirement that X% must be from communities with a population under 7,500.

**Recommendation 1.2 and Recommendation 3.4:** I would like to see an addition to the proposal that state agencies should be required to use information from the local plans in their Smart Planning Process. All too often one cannot even see rural communities goals and plans reflected in State plans. With all the emerging technology, it is no longer necessary for populations to be centered in major cities for a state to prosper. Our rural communities have opportunities to grow and prosper perhaps more than they have in the last 50 to 60 years because of technology. In addition to seeing what local communities see as their opportunity to economically grow, the state needs to move many of their jobs out to rural communities. Several years ago there was some talk of that, but I have not seen work toward accomplishing that.

It is entirely possible that rural areas would not continue to see a decline in population if given the tools to rebuild and entice and if the State of Iowa actually put its full strength behind such a movement.

In a document from the Office of Energy Independence, one recommendation to conserving energy is to establish hubs in rural communities from which people could work rather than traveling to another community. If the State gave incentives to some of the states larger corporations particularly to make use of such Hubs – it could save energy and could positively impact communities like Villisca.

**Recommendation 1.3: COGS and Regions** – This seems to be a constant problem in the State – what makes a region. I don't know how or when the Council of Government boundaries were put in place. SWIPCO serves Villisca well on several levels. In other cases, the Southwest Iowa Coalition, with a membership of 19 counties, serves Villisca. Villisca is a part of another "region" when it comes to regional marketing, and it serves its purpose well.

As I look at some of the specifics in the items the regional plans must consider, the COGs may not be able to necessarily address each one effectively. I would think it would be more effective for there to be one set of regions established on watershed lines; another on transportation diversity; another on hazard mitigation. The plans need to make sense. It is in these areas where a community like Villisca will have to receive outside guidance for inclusion in our Smart Plan. ( I will say we have an excellent hazard mitigation plan because of the efforts of SWIPCO and one of our City Council members who was able to refine what SWIPCO created based on his professional expertise.) Initially this would seem that it would cost more money. In reality, if the plans are useful, then there is going to have to be collaboration between the COGs along the watershed lines, the transportation lines, etc. So the money is going to be spent. From my perspective, it makes most sense to spend the money by having it done once whether than over and over through crossing COGs boundaries.

As I indicated at the meeting, there needs to be a way to further encourage communication between communities in their planning process outside the SWIPCO region. This could include tourism, business development, marketing, etc. These areas do not have the same technical connections as watersheds and transportation and working within a COG for a regional plan does not seem to have the same implications.

**A question:** What happens if a local community does not write a plan? How will it affect regions that may apply for grants or funding of one kind or another. I don't see that addressed. I mention it because of the problem that was created for some regions when IDED required all communities to be up to date with LOIS if a region was to access state funds. It was a mess for some time trying to get the very small communities to meet their obligation.

**Crossing state boarders:** I well understand that state money cannot go toward strengthening other states but it seems that somewhere in this plan it should address the issues of collaboration with bordering states. There is a mindset here that can also be reflected in the regional collaboration emphasis. Just as Iowa may say – we are not going to provide funding for Nebraska, Missouri, Illinois, etc. so do communities say we are not going to finance growth in neighboring communities and counties saying the same thing. I don't have the solution to setting boundaries. I

do know, a community can make the case that they do not need to collaborate with neighboring communities if Iowa does not collaborate with its neighboring states. It is a dilemma.

**Rebuild Iowa:** I know that the Rebuild Iowa office was established because of the 2008 Floods, etc. It was devastating to Iowa and eastern Iowa specifically. I would say though that the concept could be taken beyond that recovery. The rural parts of Iowa, such as southwest Iowa is in a different kind of recovery – a recovery from the changes in agriculture and the loss of population from those changes. I did not live in Iowa during the prosperous times but I have seen photos and heard stories. With all the changes that technology has brought to society, if Iowa would put some resources toward it, we could rebuild rural Iowa. We could bring back a lot of the vibrancy that once crossed this land. It would not just be a case of moving people from the metro areas such as Des Moines, Davenport, etc. – it would mean bringing people in from other states. Instead of forcing schools into consolidation because of diminishing size – it would make more sense economically to work with these rural communities to retain our young families and to bring new ones into the area. This is a place where the State Smart Planning could be influenced by the Smart Planning of the small communities if they were open to it.

**E-mail #9:**

1. Please implement coordination of state, local, and regional planning for transportation, flood impact reduction and watershed to reduce government cost and duplication. It is important that both agencies and local governments find ways to coordinate their efforts and increase efficiencies for balancing the budget.
2. The cost associated with this planning and coordination should be put into motion by the State agencies and local government and paid for with current resources.
3. Property taxes and franchise fees shouldn't be used to raise funds for smart planning and coordination.
4. In poor economic times, new State agencies should not be created for these purposes.
5. Any costly state or local regulations that infringe on property rights must be avoided.
6. A coalition of Agricultural, Conservation and public interests should be used for local watershed planning.

**E-mail #10:** While it is always a good thing to plan ahead for our needs and to reduce overlap and duplication of government costs and services; We must be certain not to use this as an excuse to grow government and increase costs to the taxpayers of this state. This planning should be the responsibility of all levels of government and should be carried out with existing personnel and within existing budgets. Care must be taken to ensure that any state plans, regulations, or requirements, don't infringe upon individuals property rights. Any planning that is to be done should have inputs from all parties that may be affected by such plans (public, agricultural, conservationist, and governmental). In these economical times we absolutely must not levy new taxes, fees, or increase other costs as a result of this planning.

**E-mail #11:** What is the most cost effective blend of flood protection components? There should be a flood protection study that is framed as a blend of three components. How much upstream detention, together with how much river channel flow enhancement and control, can compliment what levee height adjustment or what reduction in flood insurance rates? I now ask the regional planners, as I have also asked the Corps, to consider a system of six to nine thousand small upstream detention areas— in a plan to temporarily detain storm water where it falls — because

upstream detention provides benefits throughout a watershed and all the communities who benefit can share the costs.

The benefits throughout the watershed include:

1. Localized protection from ever more frequent and costly, local flash floods;
2. Reduction in environmental damage from nitrite pollution from fertilizer in the runoff;
3. Replenishment and stabilization of our ground waters and aquifers;
4. Potential for capture and storage for irrigation during periods of dryness.

My visual on site searches for upstream detention sites suggests that there is some quantity of low cost upstream detention (some on lands that the governments already own or control) that can give us some percentage of reduction in the risk of flood crest height at a low cost that can hopefully be cost effective. I believe that the first third of the storage capacity for upstream detention of storm-water can cost significantly less per unit than the last third.

Now that the highly accurate LiDAR topography mapping is available, it is time to ask the Flood Center at the University of Iowa to redo their map of the 42 mini-watersheds in the 26 square mile Dry Creek watershed that flows through Palo, IA which is just upstream from Cedar Rapids. This watershed has been selected as a demonstration watershed for flood risk reduction. Using the LiDAR maps of these mini- watersheds, the goal should be to identify the one-third of the sites for temporary storm-water storage that are the most cost effective. If ranking the best third is harder than it is worth, at least with LiDAR we can make good estimates of costs in several promising mini-water sheds. For each site, we can estimate the quantity of acre-feet of storage, the land area that would be covered with this water, the necessary height, size and cost of the water-gate, and we can ask the crop insurance companies for an estimate for a crop insurance rider to cover the potential crop loss due to temporary storm-water storage at each site. Using these four cost factors we can estimate an average cost per acre-foot of storage. This would be an estimate of the supply side cost of upstream detention.

Then on the demand side we need to estimate of the value of each acre- foot of storage for the city of Palo against the risk of flash flooding. Here the Flood Center would hopefully be willing and able to give a rough estimate the effect of a certain quantity of temporary storage on reducing the probability of a certain elevation of a potential flood crest going through Palo. Facts about the amount paid by residents along Dry Creek for flood insurance and the reduction in insurance rates for each additional foot of elevation that a building has above the 100 year flood elevation are relevant to this point.

Hopefully the potential savings from a reduction in flood insurance costs is larger than the cost of creating these small, distributed temporary storm-water storage sites in the mini-watersheds.

Besides the benefit in reducing the risk of flash flooding in the Dry Creek watershed, this temporary storage can be used within a larger regionally coordinated system for the release of the stored storm- waters from all parts of a watershed, and the result will be an additional benefit against larger floods in all the communities downstream.

In a flood reduction system that is blending the components, an important factor that needs to be researched is the cumulative effects of river flow enhancements and control through the communities and all the way down the watershed. There are many dams of several kinds spread throughout the Cedar Watershed. It needs to be tested whether a conversion of most of these dams to adjustable dams can create a system of values. Using these adjustable dams as valves will cause small but noteworthy changes in the river's flow speeds that can be used to mitigate the height of flood crests. These flow speeds affect the rate at which areas of the watershed drain.

When the risk of flooding increases because the watershed or a region of the watershed is becoming saturated, it is an important factor to drain as much water as possible before the next significant rain. Lowering these dams during high risk times due to high saturation allows as much water as possible to flow by a little sooner than if the existing dams would stand fixed as they currently do. The new adjustable dam at Waverly, IA is an example where having the adjustable dam lowered will reduce the height of the crest over this dam, and then after a crest has passed over a lowered dam, this dam could be raised at a rate to hold the flowing water at a height as high as possible while at the same time not causing more damage at this point in the river. This holding back of the flow will reduce the head and speed of the crest flowing from this point. Using the traffic jam analogy, if distributed storage areas are like the parking lots for storm-runoff, then adjustable dams are like the speed bumps. If these two tools of parking lots and variable speed bumps are used in a coordinated way, they can be complementary. This complementariness is a significant management tool because rainfall predictability has its limits and margins of error. The interrelated use of these two components will help reduce the traffic jams of storm-water known as flood crests.

As the city of Cedar Rapids asks for both federal and state funds for building a local levee, I would think federal and state lawmakers would also be interested in spending the taxpayers' money from these larger jurisdictions on mitigation with benefits throughout the watersheds -- that is federal and state level funding for flood reduction components that have benefits throughout a watershed.

**E-mail #12:** I would just like to encourage you to find solutions that reduce the size of government and lower spending and taxes. If your proposals add government agencies or increase spending or taxes, that is moving in the wrong direction.

**E-mail #13:** The legislature should not be giving new authority for state or local governments to levy new property taxes, franchise fees or energy taxes to raise funds for smart planning and coordination. Any local, regional or state plans that force costly state or local regulations on private property owners, or that infringe upon property rights, must be avoided. New state agencies or offices do not need to be created for these purposes, especially in poor economic times. Local watershed planning should include a coalition of agricultural, conservation and public interests. Coordination of local, regional and state planning for transportation, flood impact reduction and watershed needs can help reduce government duplication and costs. It is important for agencies and local governments to find ways to better coordinate their efforts and increase efficiencies to balance the budget.

**E-mail #14:** The one thing that I wanted to voice my support for, and the sole reason why I'm writing you, is the recommendation 3.8 that calls for the development of an accessible statewide GIS and data system. Ever since I started my work at MIDAS I've been voicing to my coworkers my dream of having a some kind of GIS branch of the government that would solely exist to be the main distributor of standardized GIS information for the good of all at no cost. I thought that it was just a dream and that it would never actually happen, so you can realize my surprise when I saw it among the recommendations for the Smart Planning Legislation. As well as being a planner at MIDAS, I'm also responsible for a USDA grant that we have to develop GIS usage throughout our COG area and provide free GIS training to entities that qualify in the conditions of the grant. Another responsibility of that grant is to create a regional GIS database to give out to recipients...one of the problems that I've realized while trying to compile that database is that while trying to find data you currently have to go to several different database sources. These sources of course differ in how they prepare and organize that data, and the level of detail that the data goes into. For example, most of the data that is readily accessible is at the state level, when generally the data that we as a COG NEED is local data. This data is often coveted by local entities, especially if they were developed by a third party, which causes more duplication of efforts, often at the cost of local

communities. If there was a standard created for all GIS data established at the state level, that all local levels could follow, this would allow different analysis to be performed at region-wide levels, such as economic development for an entire region.

I believe that establishing a GIS office that would set a standard for data, as well as providing a free data clearinghouse for everyone would be a smart economic move. If we would all share the information that we've already developed we could not only be saving money by removing duplication of effort, but enhancing all of our abilities to perform GIS analysis throughout the state.

There is one thing that I would like to add however. If the development of this GIS system could also include the development of data for the benefit of the commonwealth that would be fantastic. At the county level there is generally some kind of GIS activity going on, but at the community level there is generally very little to none. The communities would like to get into GIS, but the cost is prohibitive for them. If something can be done to address that, I believe that the well-being of our entire state would be much improved.

**E-mail #15:** Members of Iowa CCI do not think factory farms should be exempt from local zoning and comprehensive plans. Any kind of “smart planning” cannot ignore the detrimental environmental, economic and social impacts of factory farms on local communities. We believe that local communities should have the final say on the siting of large-scale factory farms. We realize these would have to be legislative changes, and ask you to join us in supporting:

**Local Control to Counties:**

Establish real local control over the siting of factory farms. Counties should have the final say on if, and where, factory farms are built in order to: 1.) preserve and protect natural resources, including water sources and fragile environmental locations; 2.) lessen congestion and overcrowding of confined feeding operations, especially near cities; 3.) and to protect the health and welfare of the public.

**Fair Taxation:** Update Iowa’s tax code to make sure factory farms pay their fair share of property taxes. Iowa’s tax code has not been updated since the 1970’s to account for the shift from family farms to industrial factory farms. This has resulted in a tax code in which factory farm buildings pay the same amount of property taxes as if crops were grown on the land. Factory farms should pay a fair amount of property taxes based on the cost of the buildings and the revenue the factory farms generate.

**E-mail #16:** I am writing you tonight to let you know of my concern about the ever expanding roll of government. There needs to be: Coordination of local, regional and state planning for transportation, flood impact reduction and watershed needs can help reduce government duplication and costs. It is important for agencies and local governments to find ways to better coordinate their efforts and increase efficiencies to balance the budget.

Coordination and planning for these purposes is the responsibility of all levels of government. The costs associated with this planning and coordination need to be prioritized by the various state agencies and local governments and paid for with current resources.

The legislature should not be giving new authority for state or local governments to levy new property taxes, franchise fees or energy taxes to raise funds for smart planning and coordination. In an effort to be fiscally responsible, the state legislature should be reducing state expenditures and financial impacts on local governments.

New state agencies or offices do not need to be created for these purposes. Any local, regional or state plans that force costly state or local regulations on private property owners, or that infringe upon property rights, must be avoided.

Local watershed planning should include a coalition of agricultural, conservation, and public interests. This is not the time to increase the financial burden on Iowans.

**E-mail #17:**

1. Years ago, I was a volunteer civil defense person in a small county, not much happened except major snow storms, with blocked roads. From the looks of the information it is almost the same, except a great deal of federal money is available.
2. It is important to have all of the planning, contact people, and course of action laid out for any kind of disaster. As simple as it seems, it is what makes things happen. Waiting on the state, and federal Govt, does not make things happen.
3. New Orleans was a prime example of what can happen, if things are not laid out. The history channel had a special on how poorly New Orleans was a couple of years ahead of Katrina. They still have not come out of all the problems and damage.
4. Parkersburg is another example of what can happen in Iowa in a blink of an eye. It happened in a smaller town, so things worked out better.
5. We were in Cedar Rapids, toured the Czech village, and what a mess. It appears the gov't has stuck it to all the people in the area. The houses are still damaged, and vacant. The Federal, state, and city gov't, have not done anything to help get people back in their homes. Even the owners can not do anything to their homes because of all the red tape.

**E-mail #18:** Supports the Farm Bureau and wants to add: While I support the started messages and opportunities to be looked at, the German model of Growing your own fuel from field to fuel tank needs to be implemented for "adaptation" to the Iowa and US economy. Farmers can thus use and sell their "home-grown" fuel at RETAIL. (Not like everything else as WHOLESale) The attached picture is worth exploring! Please help us on how we can be heard for this movement to get a from the ground up hearing! (See "Circle Energy" & "German Oil Mills," available upon request)

**E-mail #19:** What I am finding out is that the Mississippi River Basin Initiative is a step in the right direction. The focus is on sub-watersheds of the Mississippi River. Allowing conservation incentives to help in conservation farming practices is a good idea at this point.

**E-mail #20:** I think the biggest problem that I'm having is that I can't visualize what sort of document you end up with when you're done. I looked at the link that's below. The concept makes sense, and, if it is a matter of doing something like the graphic in the brochure (a more detailed land use plan,) then I think it is workable. But, I'm wondering about the number of cases where new or revised comp plans aren't as important. For example, 20 years ago, I was on the city council in my hometown, Fairbank, which has a population of about 1000. I'm not aware that we had a comp plan then, and I doubt that they've done one since. While I could see them maybe doing a detailed land use plan, I'm not sure that I see them as concluding that there's need for a comp plan—unless the absence of one disqualified them for funding.

I guess the point that I'm trying to make is that comp plans and smart plans might not be appropriate for all cities. Or, there might be different or more elementary levels of planning that are more appropriate for some cities. Perhaps, the process should allow for that. I'd like to suggest that a smart plan might even be something that's independent of a comp plan—sort of like what the old "community builder plans" were in the 1990s. (However, I can't say that our City really used its community builder plan very much or for very long.)

Lastly, I'd like to add to what I mentioned below about page 28 of the report that the League sent out. I assume that a smart plan will be passed by way of at least one public hearing and probably a Council resolution or ordinance. I assume that there will be undertakings in the plan that will cause future expenses. But, if the funding for these improvements aren't allowed outside of the \$8.10 levy or if they are subject to a referendum or a reverse-referendum, then I think a lot of plans and a lot of goals will be rendered useless because they can't be funded.